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TAGS: OVIP PREL AF PK

SUBJECT: Secretary Clinton's March 31, 2009 Conversation
with Pakistani FM Qureshi

Classified by: Kenneth H. Merten, Deputy Executive
Secretary, S/ES, Department of State. Reason 1.4.(b,d)

¶1. (U) March 31, 2009; 9:50 am; The Hague,
Netherlands.

¶2. (U) Participants:

U.S.

The Secretary

Deputy Secretary Lew

SRAP Holbrooke

A/S Boucher

Ms. Abedin, Dep. Chief of Staff to the Secretary

Mr. Sullivan, Dep. Chief of Staff to the Secretary

Mr. Falls (Embassy Notetaker)

OTHER COUNTRY

FM Qureshi

Lt. Gen. Pasha, DG of Inter Service Intelligence

Mr. Haroon, UN Permrep

Mr. Chaudry, Ambassador to the Netherlands

Mr. Shaukat, Secretary for Afghanistan and Economic
Coordination

Mr. Nasir Ali Khan, Ambassador at Large

Mr. Sahebzada Khan, DG of FM's Office

¶3. (U) SUMMARY. The Secretary and FM Qureshi reviewed
Afghanistan, U.S aid and bilateral relations,
counterterrorism, and Pakistan's relations with India.
They agreed to focus on a "work list" to implement the
new strategy and to concentrate on better messaging. END
SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

¶4. (C) The Secretary and FM Qureshi met on the margins
of the March 31 Dutch-Afghan-UN conference on the
Afghanistan in The Hague ("International Conference on
Afghanistan: A Comprehensive Strategy in a Regional
Context"). She thanked Qureshi for his participation
and noted U.S. commitment to help the Pakistani people
and promote security.

¶5. (C) FM Qureshi responded that Pakistan is "by and
large in agreement" with the new U.S. policy on
Afghanistan and Pakistan -- there is a "great consonance
of views." The regional approach is the right one, and
U.S. efforts to use "smart power" are welcome. "You say
'holistic' approach, we say '3D.'" Pakistan will work
with the United States because "we are a smart and
responsible nation" and also because it is in our own
interest. There is now a greater consensus that we have
to fight terror. The message of the President has given
people hope.

¶6. (C) The Secretary noted SRAP Holbrooke would represent the United States at the April 17 Pakistan conference in Tokyo. The United States wants to create a transparent aid process, and the President has asked for metrics to assess progress. The Secretary asked for help over the next two weeks to create a "work plan." The United States needs Pakistan's help to make the "best case" at the Tokyo conference. The United States can provide staff assistance if desired. The United States would not be passing judgment on any plans, but helping to promote it. We would like to translate funding into "results," as we do in Afghanistan, for example. Deputy Secretary Lew added that the U.S. Congress needs project details before it will approve funding. Other nations are also looking for details from the GoP. Congress will ask us to show results.

¶7. (C) Qureshi noted the planned economic assistance, including Reconstruction Opportunity Zones, was "very welcome." In Islamabad, the GoP has shared needs with local diplomats. Qureshi designated a key contact at MFA to manage this issue. The MFA is planning a meeting in Abu Dhabi on April 1 to prepare for the Pakistan conference. Pakistan needed to work "9 to 5" on this. At the same time, showing immediate results in Pakistan will be different than in Afghanistan, because Pakistan has "weak institutions" rather than "no institutions." Nonetheless, we can show progress with approved legislation, the delivery of goods, improved capacity, and improvements in individual's daily lives. Qureshi urged further discussions.

¶8. (C) Qureshi noted that the next step is to "improve our messaging." U.S. statements and the aid package have been a big help in improving the U.S. image in Pakistan. A visit by the Secretary, perhaps ahead of the Afghan elections, "would reassure people that we are friends, partners." We also need to engage and mobilize Pakistan's strong religious tradition against terrorism. We need to "project the correct image of Islam. Most Pakistanis are moderates, but we have not done enough to tap into this. We need a planned media campaign." He cited the need to build on Sufi traditions of moderate Islam.

¶9. (C) The Secretary agreed "we have to work together to present" our message in support of security, democracy and prosperity for Pakistan. Pakistan can play a major role in the world. She welcomed advice on what motivates religious extremists and on how to isolate them.

¶10. (C) On bilateral relations, Qureshi said there was

a "trust deficit" between the two countries. Both sides should put any disagreements "on the table." The most recent meetings in Washington were helpful, and Qureshi is grateful the United States announced that consultations are part of an ongoing process. The Secretary responded that she wants to help close the "trust deficit."

¶11. (C) Within Pakistan, Qureshi emphasized there is not "complete agreement" between the military and the government about what is good for Pakistan. Lt. Gen. Pasha's participation in the meeting reflects this "consonance of views." The Secretary responded that she wants help close any gaps between Pakistan's military and the GoP.

¶12. (S) General Pasha said that newspaper quotes from Washington undercut trust and made it harder to work together. Responding to SRAP Holbrooke, Lt. Gen. Pasha reported that about 90 individuals had been wounded, and 8 killed in the attack on the police training center in Lahore. Most of the suicide bombers could not be identified from their remains. However, the GoP captured a fourth individual fleeing the scene and has identified him as an Afghan from Pachtia. Pasha will share more details, when available, with Embassy Islamabad.

¶13. (S) Qureshi noted the attacks are timed to GOP international travel. Mumbai took place when he was traveling. Pasha added that Pakistan is now more focused on working with intelligence information and promised action against the Taliban leaders in Quetta. "We could do better if we share information ... good chance we could nab someone" if we work together. Pasha will visit his CIA counterpart and wants to renew bilateral commitments to work together.

Relations with India

¶14. (S) Responding to the Secretary about the status of the Mumbai prosecutions, Qureshi responded that "we intend to make progress" and that the two governments had recently exchanged additional information and promised action against Taliban leaders in Quetta. SRAP Holbrooke asked if the FM was meeting with Indian Special Envoy Lambah, who is key. Qureshi said Lambah sat with him during the Moscow conference on Afghanistan.

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